A BALSAM PILLOW.

Story of the First of Its Kind.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

Now that fir needles and hemlock needles have become recognized articles of commerce and every other shop boasts its row of fragrant cushions, with their inevitable motto, "Give Me of Thy Balm, O Fir Tree," I am reminded of the first pillow of the sort I ever saw and of what it meant to the girl who made it. I should like to tell you the little story, simple as it is. It belongs to the time, eight or nine years since, before pine pillows became popular. Perhaps Chateaubriand Dorset may be said, for once in her life, to have set a fashion.

Yes, that was really her name! Her mother met with it in a newspaper and, without the least idea as to whether it appertained to man or woman, adopted it for her baby. The many syllables fascinated her, I suppose, and there was, besides, that odd joy in a piece of extravagance that costs nothing which appeals to the thrifty New England nature and is one of its wholesome outlets and indulgences.

So the Methodist elder baptized the child Chateaubriand Araminta, making very queer work of the unfamiliar accents, and then, so far as practical purposes are concerned, the name ceased to be. How can a busy household, with milk to set and milk to skim and pans to scald and butter to make and pigs to feed find time for a name like that? "Baby" the little girl was called till she was well settled on her feet and in the use of her little tongue. Then she became "Brie," and Brie Dorset she remained to the end. Few people recollected that she possessed any other name unless the marriage, birth and death pages of the family Bible happened to be under discussion.

The Dorsets' was one of those picturesque, lonely, outlying farms past which people drive in the summer saying: "How retired! How peaceful!" but past which almost no one drives in winter. It stood, with its environment of red barns and apple orchards, at the foot of a low granite cliff whose top was crowned with a fir wood and two enormous elm trees met over its roof and made a checker work of light and shade on its closely blinded front.

No sign of life appeared to the city people who drew their horses in to admire the situation except perhaps a hen scratching in the vegetable beds or a lazy cat basking on the doorstep, and they would drive on unconscious that behind the slats of the green blinds above a pair of eyes watched them go and a hungry young heart contrasted their lot with its own.

Hungry! There never was anything like the starvation which goes on sometimes in those shut up farmhouses. Boys and girls feel it alike, but the boys are less to be pitied, for they can usually devise means to get away.

How could Brie get away? She was the only child. Her parents had not married young. When she was 19, they seemed almost elderly people, so badly does life on a bleak New England farm deal with human beings. Her mother, a frail little woman, grew year by year less fit for hard labor. The farm was not productive.

The fir wood on the upper hill was the temple where she worshiped. There she went with her Bible on Sunday afternoons, with her patching and stocking mending on other days. There she dreamed her dreams and prayed her prayers, and while there she was content. But all too soon would come the sound of the horn blown from below or a call from the house: "Brie, Brie, the men are coming to supper. Make haste!" And she would be forced to hurry back to the work-a-day world. When she was just 20, her father fell from his loaded hay wagon and fractured his thigh. There was no cure for the hurt, and after six months of hopeless attendance he died. Brie and her mother were left together on the lonely farm, with the added burden of a large bill for doctoring and medicines, which pressed like a heavy weight on their honorable hearts.

The hired man, Reuben Hall, was well disposed and honest, but before Mr. Dorset's death he had begun to talk of going to the west, and Brie foreboded that he might not be willing to stay with them. Mrs. Dorset, broken down by nursing and sorrow, had become an invalid, unable to assist save in the lightest ways. The burden was sore for one pair of shoulders to bear. Brie kept up a brave face by day, but at night horrors of helplessness and apprehension seized her. The heavens seemed as brass, against which her feeble prayers beat in vain; the future was barred, as it were, with an impassable gate.

What could they do? Sell the farm? That would take time, for no one in particular wanted to buy it. If Reuben would stand by them, they might be able to fight it out for another year and what with butter and eggs and the corn crop make enough for his wages and a bare living. But would Reuben stay?

Our virtues sometimes treat us as investments do and return a dividend when we least expect it. It was at this hard crisis that certain good deeds of Brie's in the past stood her friend. She had always been good to Reuben, and her sweet ways and consideration for his comfort had gradually won a passage into his rather stolid affections. Now, seeing the emergency she was in and the courage with which she met it, he could not quite find the heart to "leave the little gal to make out by herself." Fully purposing to go, he staid, putting off the idea of departure from month to month, and, though true to his idea of proper caution, he kept his good intentions to himself, so that relief of having him there was constantly tempered by the dread lest he might go at any time. Still it was relief.

So April passed and May and June. The crops were planted, the vegetables in. Brie strained every nerve. She petted her hens and coaxed every possible egg out of them; she studied the tastes of the two cows; she maintained a brave show of cheer for her ailing mother, but all the time she was sick at heart. Everything seemed closing in. How long could she keep it up?

The balsam firs of the hill grove could have told tales in those days. They were Brie's sole confidants. The consolation they gave, the counsel they communicated, were mute, indeed, but none the less real to the anxious girl who sat beneath them or laid her cheek on their rough stems. June passed, and with early July came the answer to Brie's many prayers. It came, as answers to prayers often do, in a shape of which she had never dreamed.

Miss Mary Morgan, teacher in Grammar School No. 3, Ward 19, of the good city of Boston, came, tired out from her winter's work, to spend a few days with Farmer Allen's wife, her second cousin, stopped one day at the Dorsets' door while driving to ask for a drink of water, took a fancy to the old house and to Brie and next day came over to propose herself as a boarder for three months.

"I can only afford to pay $7 a week," she said. "But, on the other hand, I will try not to make much trouble if you will take me."

"Seven dollars a week! Only think!" cried Brie gleefully to her mother after the bargain was completed and Miss Morgan gone. "Doesn't it seem like a fortune? It'll pay Reuben's wages and leave ever so much over! And she doesn't eat much meat, she says, and she likes baked potatoes and cream and sweet baked apples better than anything. And there's the keeping room chamber all cleaned and ready. Doesn't it seem as if she was sent to us, mother?"

"Your poor father never felt like keepin boarders," said Mrs. Dorset. "I used to kind of fancy the idea of it, but he wasn't willin. I thought it would be company to have one in the house if they was nice folks. It does seem as if this was the Lord's will for us, her comin so unexpected and all."

Two days later Miss Morgan, with a hammock, a folding canvas chair and a trunkful of light reading, arrived and took possession of her new quarters. For the first week or two she did little but rest, sleeping for hours at a time in the hammock, swung beneath the shadowing elms. Then, as the color came back to her thin face and the light to her eyes, she began to walk a little, to sit with Brie in the fir grove or read aloud to her on the doorstep while she mended, shelled peas or picked over berries, and all life seemed to grow easier and pleasanter for the dwellers in the solitary farmhouse. The guest gave little trouble, she paid her weekly due punctually, and the steady income, small as it was, made all the difference in the world to Brie.

As the summer went by and she grew at home with her new friend she found much relief in confiding to her the perplexities of her position.

"I see," Miss Morgan said; "it is the winter that is the puzzle. I will engage to come back next summer, as I have this, and that will help along, but the time between now and then is the difficulty."

"Yes," replied Brie, "the winter is the puzzle, and Reuben's money. We have plenty of potatoes and corn and vegetables to take us through, and there's the pig to kill, and the chickens will lay some. If only there were any way in which I could make enough for Reuben's wages, we could manage."

"I must think it over," said Miss Morgan.

She pulled a long branch of the balsam fir nearer as she spoke and buried her nose in it. It was the first week of September, and she and Brie were sitting in the hill grove.

"I love this smell so," she said. "It is delicious. It makes me dream."

Brie broke off a bough.

"I shall hang it over your bed," she said, "and you'll smell it all night."

So the fir bough hung upon the wall till it gradually yellowed and the needles began to drop.

"Why, they are as sweet as ever—sweeter!" declared Brie, smelling a handful which she had swept from the floor. Then an idea came into her head.

She gathered a great fagot of the branches and laid them to dry in the sun on the floor of a little used piazza. When partly dried, she stripped off the needles, stuffed with them a square cotton bag and made for that a cover of soft sage green silk with an odd shot pattern over it. It was a piece of what had been her great-grandmother's wedding gown.

Brie had made the first of all the many balsam pillows. It was meant for a goodby gift to Miss Morgan.

"Your cushion is the joy of my life," wrote that lady to her a month after she went home. "Every one who sees it falls in love with it. Half a dozen people have asked me how they could get one like it, and, Brie, this has given me an idea. Why should you not make them for sale? I will send you up some pretty silk for the covers, and you might cross stitch a little motto if you like. I'll copy some for you. Two people have given me an order already. They will pay $4 apiece if you like to try."

This suggestion was the small wedge of the new industry. Brie lost no time in making the two pillows, grandmother's gown fortunately holding out for their covers. Then came some pretty red silk from Miss Morgan, with yellow filoselle for the mottoes, and more orders. Brie worked busily that winter, for her balsam pillows had to be made in spare moments when other work permitted. The grove on the hill was her unfailing treasury of supply. The thickset twigs bent them to her will, the upper branches seemed to her to rustle as with satisfaction at the aid they were giving. In the spring the old trees renewed their foliage with vigorous purpose, as if resolved not to balk her in her work.

The fir grove paid Reuben's wages that winter. Miss Morgan came back the following June, and by that time balsam pillows were established as articles of commerce, and Brie had a munificent offer from a recently established decorative art society for a supply of the needles at $3 a pound. It was hard, dirty work to prepare such a quantity, but she did not mind.

As I have said, this was some years ago. Brie no longer lives in the old home. Her mother died the third year after Miss Morgan came to them, the farm is sold and Brie married. She lives now on a ranch in Colorado, but she has never forgotten the fir grove, and the memory of it is a help often in the desponding moments that come at times to all lives.

WHAT A BILLION MEANS.

So glibly, indeed, do we use the word "billion" that few of us pause to consider the immensity of the sum. How long would it take to count a billion? A few years perhaps. Well, yes. At the rate of 100 a minute—a very liberal allowance of speed—and calling eight hours a day's work, 48,000 would be counted a day. In a year of 300 working days the score would be 14,400,000, and it would require 69 1-3 years to count the full billion. The prophet's span of threescore and ten, minus a few months, would be consumed in the simple counting of the sum that trips so lightly from the tongue these days. —Minneapolis Times.

THE OTHER EYE.

James Albery the dramatist, was one day descending in a great hurry the steps fronting the Savage club, London, when a stranger in a state of mind which defied punctuation addressed him thus:

"I beg your pardon, but is there a gentleman in this club with one eye of the name of X?"

Albery answered the question eagerly with another: "Stop a moment. What's the name of the other eye?"—Youth's Companion.

HOSPITAL LIFE.

Whatever the cost of care in the hospital for board, lodging, nursing, treatment, it is always in the long run less than the price paid when the same siege of illness is managed in any other way. Experience proves this again and again. Not all conditions demand hospital care. Far from it. But, when they do, going to the hospital is cheaper, easier, safer and more comfortable than staying at home. — Harper's Bazar.

A Strange Instance of Heredity.

Two young men were walking down Chestnut street, when one of them stumbled slightly. Instantly he covered his eyes with both hands as though some dreadful explosion were about to happen. It was an odd and needless gesture, and in answer to a question from his friend he said of it:

"Whenever I stumble I do that. All my life I have been doing it. My foot slips and at once it seems to me that a great noise is to burst forth and a great flame to shoot up into my eyes. I could no more break myself of this habit than I could stop breathing.

"It is, my father says, a freak of heredity. My father is blind. He fought in the civil war, and in a certain charge one day as he ran toward the enemy his foot slipped in a furrow, he stumbled, and a shell burst in his face, blinding him. He was a young man then, and I was not yet born. He has always ever since put his hands to his eyes on stumbling, and I developed the habit at the age of 4.

"It is strange, too, how in precisely the same way my father and I make our common gesture. We place the back of our left hand over our eyes horizontally and set the palm of our right hand upon this vertically, forming a kind of cross. My father will have the habit till he dies, and I suppose that I, too, will have it all my life, thanks to heredity."—Philadelphia Record.

— Lady—"I don't like this picture so well as I did the last one you took of me." Photographer—"Ah, madame, I have not the artistic taste that I had when I was young; and, besides, my camera is getting old."

A BIT OF BUSINESS.

Turned His Rival's Purchase to His Own Account.

A short time ago the manager of one of the big stores in this city found that a rival establishment had just received a large consignment of a very fine quality of lace. Needless to say, that lace was also very expensive.

He immediately sent one of his subordinates over to the rival store with instructions to buy half a yard of the aforesaid lace. This he hung up in a conspicuous position with a very legible price mark attached, and the price marked was very reasonable. Then he gave some instructions to the girls behind the counter and retired to await developments.

Two shoppers soon happened along that way, and the piece of lace caught their attention.

"Isn't that just too beautiful!" exclaimed one of them.

But instead of answering her directly her companion grasped her by the arm and whispered excitedly, "Look at the price!"

In answer to their eager questions the shopgirl answered nonchalantly:

"That there lace? I don't think we've got any more. Wait a minute."

The two women waited while the girl consulted long and seriously with one of her fellows. The consultation was about a dance which was to take place that evening, but the would be customers never knew the difference. When it was over, the girl returned and informed them:

"Sorry, but we're all out of that lace. Guess you can get some over in Blank's, though," mentioning the rival establishment. The two women hurried away, fearing that the supply in the other store might also be exhausted before their arrival. It wasn't, but they did not buy any lace, and, furthermore, they advised all their friends to shop at Dash's, because the prices there are so reasonable. "But," they added, "you've got to get there early or the nicest things will be all sold out."—New York Sun.

THE BOY AND THE DOG.

There is no truer friendship than that of the boy and the dog. There are no happier days to which the grown man may look back with a tender regret for their passing than the days spent in the old home fields with the faithful four footed companion of youth. Confidence between boy and dog was perfect. The dog perhaps was not a thoroughbred and had come into the world minus a pedigree, but the boy accepted him for what he was and in the blessed ingenuousness of youth may even have found an occasion of added pride in the dog in some characteristic which he now knows was highly to the animal's discredit as determined by the bench show standards. And as for the dog, on his part, too, he took the boy for what he was, asking of him no more than that he should condescend to make of himself a demigod for unstinted confidence, affection and worship. If the scientists would devise a way to represent the care free happiness of boyhood days in some equivalent of foot pounds, the amount of it justly accredited to the companionship of boy and dog would be expressed in many tons.—Forest and Stream.

WAR STARTED BY GLASS OF WATER.

The war of the Spanish succession was caused by a contest between Austria and France as to whether an Austrian or a French prince should sit on the throne of Spain. The war had been determined on for several years before the death of the old King Charles II, but about the time of his death an English lady in Paris was raising a glass of water to her lips at a crowded reception. A French gentleman jostled against her and spilled the water on her dress. Her escort took up the matter, and a duel resulted, followed by so general a quarrel between the French and English residents that it was facetiously said the war was brought on by the upsetting of a glass of water.

PROVED.

The fire of a legal examination is a hot one, but an accused person who stands its test doesn't often emerge with a character the better established.

An individual of somewhat doubtful appearance was applying for a situation as van driver. On being asked for references he mentioned one of the dealer's old hands, who was called in and questioned as to the applicant's honesty. The referee rubbed his chin meditatively for a moment and said:

"Honest? Well, guv'nor, his honesty's bin proved ag'in and ag'in. Faith, he's bin tried sivin times for stealin and eshcaped every toime!"

The applicant was not engaged.—London Tit-Bits.

— Men are more self-respecting than women are. No man's bosom friend ever knows how badly his wife treats him.

Uninvited Guests.

Persons who want to save hotel bills are extremely likely to drop in at the parsonage, preferably one where the occupant has a limited salary and an unlimited family. The merest shadow of an excuse suffices for an introduction, as in two cases which a clergyman reports in the Chicago Times-Herald.

"Once," he said, "the last of our company had gone, and no new arrival was expected. I felt that I could renew acquaintance with my family and that we might sit down to a meal without strangers being present. Just then the doorbell rang. I opened the door myself, and a young lady whom I had never seen before stood on the doorstep with a satchel in her hand.

"'Are you the Dev. Dr. Blank?' she asked.

"I told her that I was, and she introduced herself as coming from Akron, O.

"'I heard you preach in Akron when I was a little girl, and now I have come to spend a few days with your family and hear you preach again.'

"I handed her over to my wife and daughters, and she staid a week and treated us with the assurance of an old friend."

Another guest he liked to tell about was a fussy old woman from his native town who had been waited on by every member of his family in turn and who exacted constant attention. When she was leaving after a month's visit, he went to the door to see her off and politely ventured to hope that her stay with them had been pleasant.

"I don't know as I have anything to complain of," was the depressing answer.

Armour's Generosity.

The employees of the late P. D. Armour always referred to him as "the old man." This was not so much the result of a habit among workmen of calling their employer "the old man" as an eccentricity of the "old man" himself. When he wanted to give aid anonymously, he said, "That's from the old man." Many gifts went out of his pocket under the signature of "The Old Man."

A young girl went to the business office of the great packing concern one day to report the illness of a friend who worked as stenographer in the office. Mr. Armour happened to stand near and overheard the girl's request for an advance in her friend's salary with which to pay the doctor's bill. Thrusting his thumb into his vest pocket—that pocket which seemed a mint of greenbacks—he handed the girl a roll of bills.

"Take that to your friend," he said, then adding to relieve the girl's astonishment, "Tell her the old man sent it."

Before the girl could thank him he was gone, but just as she left the building he again appeared and, finding her gone, hurried hatless into the street.

"Here, here! I forgot something," he called.

The girl turned back, and without a word Mr. Armour pressed something into her hand. She looked down. It was a $20 bill.

Mr. Armour had decided that his gift was not sufficient and hastened to increase it.—New York Tribune.

— Harvey J. Lynn, a former United States cavalryman, Pittson, Penn., has undergone an operation for the removal of a piece of ox bone from his skull and the insertion of a silver plate. While serving in Cuba over a year ago Lynn was shot in the head. At the hospital a piece of ox bone was grafted into his skull, but the operation was not entirely successful, and Lynn was given a disability discharge. He has since been afflicted with paralysis, resulting from the bone pressing the brain, and went to a hospital to have the ox bone removed.

brilliant new star which was discovered on February 22nd is the Star of Bethlehem, which makes its appearance about every 400 years. A student at Vassar, which is sorely a woman's college, claims the honor of having first observed the star's appearance this time.

— A Boston clergyman in praising conjugal fidelity referred eloquently to the fact that Adam had but one Eve. But it is doubtful if Adam deserves any special credit for this, seeing that there was no other Eve on earth at the time.

— Do not be so busy that you cannot give another the benefit of a kindly smile, or a pleasant word, or a listening ear. Business and Christian sympathy need not, and ought not, to conflict. The loving heart should always find expression.

— An oak tree of average size with 7,000,000 leaves lifts from the earth into the air about 123 tons of water during the five months it is in leaf.

— To furnish the people of the world with bread, more than 2,300,000,000 bushels of wheat are consumed each year.

— The "army food of the future," it is predicted, will be dried eggs in cans.

— The census of Mexico's population takes into account 11 Indian languages.

— Mexico buys all of it shears and and sharpedged tools from the United States.

— A woman's tongue—different from other edged tools—becomes more cutting when she loses her temper.

— Speak kindly all the time if you would hear only pleasing echoes.

— Unless you have faith in your ability you can never win a battle.

— Life and coat buttons often hang by slender threads.

— Time waits for no man—unless he is carrying the ticket for his watch.

— In the ladder of success there are many rounds of failure.

— A carbuncle is a jewel of a relative.

— When it rains hardest the laundress catches the most soft water.

— When a woman's feelings are worked up she should order a fresh supply.

— A charge of bayonets is sometimes made for the purpose of gaining credit.

— A woman pats a strange baby in about the same manner a man pats a strange dog.

— It's a mean man who will deliberately walk between a woman and a milliner's window.

— It doesn't matter much how a man lies when asleep just so he sticks to the truth when awake.

— A woman can never understand why there is no such thing as fashion in politics.

— The bravest man I ever knew was terribly afraid of these things—a dog, a woman and lightning.

— It's pretty hard even for a strong man to eat hash in a restaurant without turning a hair.

Notice to Stockholders.

THE annual meeting of the STOCKHOLDERS OF THE COX MANUFACTURING COMPANY will be held at the office of the Company in the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank, in Anderson, S. C., on Tuesday, April 23rd, at 12 o'clock.

W. F. COX, Pres. and Treas.

April 3, 1901 41 3

Notice to Stockholders.

TAKE NOTICE that the First Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the RIVERSIDE MANUFACTURING CO will be held at the office of the Company in Anderson, S. C., on THURSDAY, APRIL the 18th, 1901, at 12 o'clock.

D P. McBRAYER, President.

March 13, 1901 38 4

WARNING.

ALL persons are hereby warned to not hire, harbor or otherwise employ Lester Crawford, as he is under contract with me for 1901, and has left me without my consent.

W. A. DAVIS.

March 6, 1901 37 3*

Notice of Final Settlement.

THE undersigned, Executors of the Estate of James A. Drake, deceased, hereby give notice that they will on the 15th day of April, 1901, apply to the Judge of Probate for Anderson County, S. C., for a Final Settlement of said Estate, and a discharge from their office as Executors.

THOS. F. DRAKE,
JOHN R. DRAKE,
JESSE T. DRAKE,
Executors.

March 13, 1901.

Notice Final Settlement.

THE undersigned, Executrix of the Estate of J. L. Smith, deceased, hereby gives notice that she will on the 9th day of April, 1901, apply to the Judge of Probate for Anderson County for a Final Settlement of said Estate, and a discharge from her office as Executrix.

MRS. M. I. SMITH, Ex'x.

March 6 1901 37 5